

FREDERICK COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING MINUTES
DEPARTMENT OF AGING
June 10, 2013

COA MEMBERS	DOA STAFF	EXCUSED	UNEXCUSED	GUESTS
Hermine Bernstein	Sue Ramsburg	Virginia Skelley		Joseph Berman
Rae Ann Butler	Pat Rosensteel	Bill Moseley		Steve Bruns
Ernell Graham	Carolyn True	Irene Packer-Hasley		Kathy Hutchens
David Gray, Comm				Jane King, JPI
Millard Haines				Meg Motter
Carol Krimm, Alderman				Nancy Norris
Louise Lynch				Jeanette O'Malley
Mary Rice				C. Paul Smith, Comm.
Debra Savageau				Sonja Sperlich
Steve Wilhide				Linda Turbyville
Dan Yeeles				

- I. **Call to Order** – RaeAnn Butler called the meeting to order at 1:00pm.
- II. **Welcome & Introductions** – RaeAnn welcomed all attendees. Guests were present so introductions were made around the table.
- III. **Action on the Agenda** – There were minor changes to the agenda. The date for the minutes approved should be May 13th instead of April 6th. There is an addition to the New Business section. Alderman Carol Krimm will be giving an update concerning legislative changes affecting seniors. There will not be a State Commission or a USM report given at today's meeting. Alderman Krimm will not be giving a TSAC report since Nancy Norris is here reporting on a Transit proposal.

IV. Approval of Minutes – The minutes of the May 13, 2013 meeting were approved with revisions. The last name Thomson on page one and page two does not have a “p” in the name. On page four, there is a second “e” in the last name Welles and she is the Chair of the Montgomery County CoA. All were in favor.

V. Commissioner’s Report – Commissioner Gray was not present at this time but arrived later in the meeting.

Alderman’s Report – Alderman Krimm will be reporting on legislative changes later during this meeting.

VI. Transportation services and proposed voucher program – Nancy Norris – Nancy Norris was present at today’s meeting to speak about the proposal for a Taxi Voucher system to supplement the current Transit Plus system. Nancy distributed an informational handout. . The BoCC have requested they gather public input. There will be three public meetings: July 17th at 1pm at C Burr Artz Library, July 18th at 2pm at the Frederick Senior Center, and July 19th at 11 am at Winchester Hall. This program will not be a replacement for the current Transit Plus system but will be a supplement. The population of seniors is growing and there is currently no additional driver positions approved.

There will be a two zone system because of the size of the county. The zones will be based on zip code. The seniors who live further from Frederick City will have more funds loaded onto their taxi voucher debit cards. A vendor will oversee the debit card processing aspect. People will be able to go on-line to add funds to their debit card. There could also be locations where participants can get assistance loading their funds. People in Zone A will pay \$10.00 for \$60 in taxi fare. Zone B participants will pay \$20 for \$120 in taxi fare. The debit card can be filled one time each month. It will be up to the participant to decide how and when they want to use each fare system. The taxi voucher system will work within the same parameters as the current Plus system. One requirement is that participants must be registered in Transit Plus system for six months before using the vouchers. This system will be for ambulatory participants only. Wheelchair participants who can use taxi services now should be able to use this voucher service. Tips for the drivers are not included in the debit card, but tips are not required. The hours will be the same as the current Plus hours. It would be possible to extend to evenings or weekends as long as the disabled community could access the taxis.

Most taxi companies currently take debit cards, but they will be working with the vendor. Taxi companies do not have to participate in the service. Participants will have their photo on their card as a form of

identification that they are current in the Transit system. The taxi companies will be receiving full fare. The county will be subsidizing the fares. The funding to start is \$200,000 for the first year which would start in July 2014. There is a grant that would be available which would cover half the cost for the first two years. There is an application process, but approval is likely based on the type of program being proposed. There will also be start up costs for the vendor to manage the program. The cost is based on participants loading their card one time a month.

There was some discussion about the difficulty some seniors may have utilizing the debit card system. If the voucher system is approved, there will be education done by Transit. Perhaps the DoA and MAP could help with the education portion. Please email Nancy if you have any questions or suggestions.

Legislative changes which affect the senior population –

Alderman Carol Krimm – There was one big piece of legislation that went through the General Assembly this year that pertained to the MAP program. This program is now Maryland law and federal funds can be applied for. Senate Bill 83 that was passed this year codifies and formally establishes the ADRC program, now statewide as Maryland Access Point. The bill specifies that the program is the state's ADRC for purposes of the Federal Older American Act allowing for the streamlining of program administration and maximization of federal funds. MAP is the designated single entry point of assistance for long term supportive services. It is important for people to know where they can access services and in Frederick this is located at the DoA. The Balancing Incentive Program (BIP) will make funding available to sustain and enhance current efforts. Funds will need to be requested based on activities. The MAP grant application will go before the BoCC for approval this Thursday.

- VII. Needs Assessment Update – Jane King** – There has been a tremendous response to the survey. It is likely that 1,000 surveys may be completed and collected by the deadline. There is a good representation of various ages. Jane stated that the surveys may be underrepresented for minority groups. This issue may be addressed by meeting with focus groups. On June 28th a first draft will be submitted. Carolyn True has a contact for the Latino population. There is no hard data regarding geographic representation yet.

CCRC/MAL Update, Sonja Sperlich, Chairperson

Sonja stated that the Board of Trustees has contacted the state Attorney General regarding a couple issues. One issue would be to determine if the BoCC has the authority to move forward with a sale of these facilities or does the authority lie with the Board of Trustees.

There are also questions regarding the proviso on the deed limiting the use of the land. There will be a public hearing on June 25th to seek input on the sale of Citizens and Montevue. The hearing will also address possible termination of the Board of Trustees. Dismissing the Board of Trustees will give authority and control to the BoCC.

Dr. Joseph Berman and Cindy Powell were at today's meeting to speak about the proposed sale of these facilities. Cindy presented a portion of a document which focuses on data that addresses senior needs and lack of services available. They plan to have the full document available later this week. The information in this document has not been gathered and/or presented at any previous time. They have interviewed various organizations who serve low income seniors. The numbers gathered included seniors who are struggling to stay at home with whatever community services they can access. Many service providers agree that losing Montevue will be a "last vestige of hope" and would be putting lives in jeopardy. We will be losing a huge part of Frederick County history.

Commission members questioned why the Montevue list is kept at 36 and not a complete list of all needs. The belief is that adding to the list beyond that gives hope that is not there. Cindy agreed that there is a need for more data. There is no one place to get this data. The concern is that there are seniors and families that are struggling to remain safe in their homes and this need is not being recorded anywhere.

Dr. Berman stated that there has been an increased sense of urgency in gathering this information. They found out that there is no easy way to consistently gather and keep track of this information. Resources are just not in place to track the data and crunch the numbers. He is concerned that decisions are being made without this information and without any idea how the need for this facility will grow with a large aging population. He suggested we should be looking at ways to supplement the beds at Montevue with other options. Currently there are very few small group homes available in Frederick County. There needs to be a way to take care of seniors while they are on lists waiting to receive essential services. Dr Berman questioned why have the BoCC not requested these numbers before making this decision?

There are many people in the community who are not receiving services they need to remain safe. There is a need for transportation, home aide services, and meals on wheels. Agencies can provide the vulnerable seniors with options and it is up to the senior to agree or disagree to utilize the services. The need is not just for affordable assisted living beds; the need is also to keep seniors in their homes

safely for as long as they want to stay there. That is the challenge because those resources are not available.

Cindy quoted some data from the Community Foundation Needs Assessment which addressed persons living under the poverty line. Sixty-nine percent of those living under the poverty line in Frederick County were working adults. People working at this income level are going to remain under the poverty line when they can no longer work. The average income for a Montevue resident is \$840 per month. It is extremely difficult to live in Frederick County with this level of income.

The question was asked if the business end of Citizen's has grown. The profit in Citizens could help subsidize Montevue. Dr. Berman suggested that improvement is being made. He agreed progress could be moving along further and faster. If the Board of Trustees had more authority to make sure the business office was running properly, progress could be made more rapidly. Cindy suggested that the history of poor business practices is the responsibility of both the County staff and the Board of Trustees. Dr. Berman agrees with the BoCC that the facilities were not being run well and the subsidies should be decreased or eliminated. It is the course of action which is inappropriate.

Alderman Krimm stated that there is growing interest in the need of services for aging. There are state and federal funds being passed along to implement services for underprivileged seniors in their homes. She states to make this change before these programs are in place is unconscionable.

Public Comment

Meg Motter/AERS (Adult Evaluation Review Services) - Meg clarified that the 70 AERS clients in the document are actually clients who have medical assistance and they are being served by the Senior Care program. Meg stated that their program is receiving referrals of about 900 persons per year; 800 are being seen by AERS staff. Approximately half of those are at an assisted living level of care. However not all clients served are agreeable to moving to a facility. As far as statistics, AERS has a large database however there is not a staff person available to collect that data. There just is not funding available to make the data accessible. It is getting more and more difficult for aging clients to receive long term care at a facility. Most long term care facilities are more interested in short term rehab patients. There is a waiting list of 20,000 citizens statewide for the Waiver program and 400 of those are in Frederick County. There are currently 29 Frederick County citizens receiving Waiver services.

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Steve Bruns – Steve stated that this has been the best discussion he has heard regarding the needs of senior citizens. He reminded everyone that there will be a rally on June 25th at 5:00 before the public hearing at FCC. He encouraged participants to visit the Facebook page and to purchase a “Save Montevue” tee shirt for a \$10 donation.

Kathy Hutchens AERS – The folks that are at the nursing homes are there because services were not provided in the community. It is more cost effective to keep seniors in their homes. There is a lack of funding for services which would keep people safe. There are waiting lists for almost all programs. The wages for a private duty home health care is approximately \$15-\$18 per hour. The seniors the AERS nurses visit do not have an income which would allow for these private pay services. There is also a lack of family involvement. Families are burned out and in crisis. There is very limited funding for adult day care.

Carolyn stated that staff at the DoA has had an increase in the amount of calls from seniors who are no longer able to live in the family home for various reasons. She also stated that the state funding for small group homes has been level funded. Other counties that have been using these funds would have to decrease the amount of funding they use in order for Frederick County to receive any funding.

Friends of Meals on Wheels, Gail Wingate – Gail Wingate is the current President of Friends of MoW. They recently issued a grant amount of \$1,200.00 to the local MoW. Fundraising has been going very well. There was recently a fundraising letter effort by Blaine Young which garnered \$20,000. Some other recent successful events were sponsored by Country Meadows, Edenton, and Tranquility. Gail offered to send a list of future fundraising events to be held this summer. Because this is a very new non profit and costs are unknown, the amounts granted will be small for now. The DoA MoW program is currently serving 135 and there are 106 on the waiting list. Currently the program is running a deficit so this grant amount will be posted towards that loss. The DoA is also researching different vendors in order to cut costs. Citizens cannot be required to pay for their meal because federal funding is involved.

VIII. Nominating Committee, Millard Haines - No report given due to time limitation.

TSAC, Alderman Krimm – Alderman Krimm deferred to Nancy Norris on Transit updates.

State CoA, Louise Lynch – No report.

Partners in Care, Ernell Graham – No report due to time limitation.

Friends of MoW, Louise Lynch – No report.

USM, Ginny Skelley – Ginny was not present at today's meeting. No report.

Adult Public Disabled Review Board, Mary Rice – No report due to time limitation.

Director, Carolyn True – Carolyn distributed a monthly report. If you have any questions or concerns, please call or email Carolyn.

Announcements, All – Normally this CoA does not meet in July. However some members felt the Montevue issue was so intense that a meeting in July is imperative. It was suggested that the public be allowed to see what the CoA is doing to help the seniors in the community. Hermine put forth a motion to hold July's meeting at Winchester Hall. Millard seconded the motion. All were in favor. RaeAnn will confirm that this meeting room will be available for the July meeting.

IX. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Ramsburg
Recording Secretary

Upcoming Dates:

June 24, 2013. CoA Executive Committee meeting, 1:00 at Frederick County Dept of Aging

July 8, 2013, Commission on Aging, 1:00 at Winchester Hall, 12 East Church Street, Frederick, MD. third floor hearing room. Please allow time to park and sign in at the security desk.